



Confidence

for emerging artists



By Holly Ball, Creative Careers Coach & Specialist

July 2026



Who this resource is for

This resource is for early career artists, who want to take control of developing their creative career. Early career means someone who has started working in the creative and cultural industries in the last two years. It doesn't matter how old you are - this is about helping you to move forward and develop the creative career you want for yourself. You might not yet identify as an artist and that's OK. This resource has been designed to help you move forward whenever you are ready.

About this resource

This resource focuses on improving confidence to develop the creative career you want. It is based on professional practice and theories of career information, advice and guidance, designed to empower the reader to take action for themselves.

Please note that the information shared is correct at the time of publication. Any signposting to external websites and resources does not constitute endorsement. Readers are expected to research further and seek professional expertise where needed.

About the author

I'm Holly Ball, a Creative Careers Specialist with over fifteen years of experience supporting artists to develop the creative career they want. A proud Salford creative, I build journeys that help artists get unstuck in their creative careers. Find out more about my work at www.careerforward.uk.

Confidence

“the quality of being certain of your abilities or of having trust in people, plans, or the future”

(Taken from the Cambridge Dictionary)

Confidence is one of the biggest factors that affects emerging creatives.

Lack of confidence looks different for everyone, it could be self-doubt, insecurity in your creative abilities, or lacking boundaries which leads to burnout. Confidence can be affected by external factors as well.

To develop the creative career you want, focus on improving your confidence and taking back control of how confident you feel in yourself.

What does confidence look like for you?

STEP ONE:

Think of an example of high confidence and an example of low confidence.

STEP TWO:

Reflect on those examples using the prompts below:

- What made you feel more or less confident in these scenarios?
- What was in your control? What was out of your control?
- Looking back, can you identify anything you learnt about yourself?
If so, how did you learn it?

Consider confidence as a sliding scale.

Confidence can change depending on a number of factors in different situations. It can be helpful to think of confidence as a sliding scale that you move up and down depending on the circumstances.

Low confidence

High confidence



Reflective Questions

- Where do you sit on the scale most often when it comes to developing your creative career?
- Where would you like to be?
- What difference would this make?
- What helps you to feel confident? However big or small
- How can moments of high confidence help you when your confidence feels lower?



Tools for Change

Practice having a Growth Mindset

This is the belief that your basic abilities, intelligence, and talents can be developed and improved through hard work, positive strategies, and feedback from others.

View your current abilities as a starting point. Seek out challenges to expand your skills, embrace feedback, and appreciate the process of improvement over the final outcome.

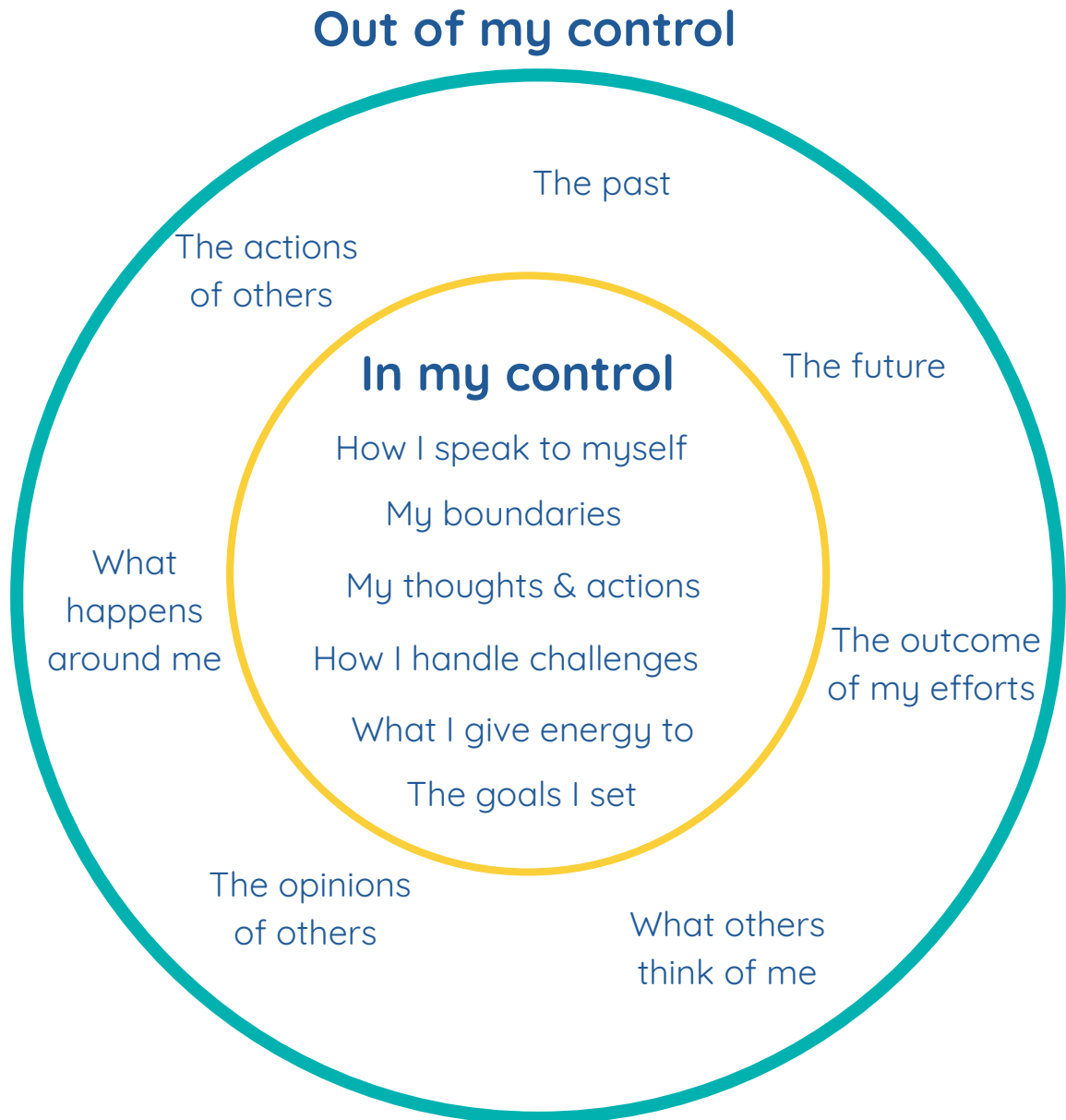
Ways to cultivate this:

- Embrace the Power of "Yet" - for example, 'I don't know how to do that yet'.
- Focus on the Process - take time to reflect on what you've learnt and how far you've come.
- Practice learning from criticism.



What's in your sphere of control?

Recognise what you can control in your creative career and what is out of your control.



As an industry we are heavily affected by external factors such as government policies, funding and what's going on in the world around us.

Consider what's in your gift to control and use that to develop your confidence and make things happen for yourself.

To find out more



Follow on Instagram
[@hollyballcareers](https://www.instagram.com/hollyballcareers)



Email at
holly@careerforward.uk



Connect on LinkedIn
[@hollyballcareers](https://www.linkedin.com/company/hollyballcareers)



Check out my website
www.careerforward.uk

